

Statement to the Public Health Committee Regarding  
Raised Bill No. 5326  
March 17, 2014

My name is Luiza Martinez and I oppose Raised Bill No. 5326. At this time I will address only two specific parts of the bill and conclude with where I believe this bill will lead us if passed.

First, I will comment on Section 16 Part C which reads, in part, as follows: "No report of a public agency may refer to the practice of obtaining and self-administering life-ending medication to end a qualified patient's life as "suicide" or "assisted suicide". My question is how can you **ever** have a clean debate about a policy if you won't label something accurately -- as exactly what it is? Even the title of this Bill, "An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients", implies the patient is being helped when in fact the patient is being killed.

Secondly, I would like to address Section 9 Part (6) (b) which reads as follows: "The attending physician may sign the qualified patient's death certificate that shall list the underlying terminal illness as the cause of death." Not only does this bill force a doctor to commit fraud by not listing the real cause of death, overdose by doctor prescribed medication, but also causes the doctor to break their Hippocratic Oath to do no harm. Also, without a death certificate indicating the suicide occurred how can the consequences of this legislation ever be quantified?

Lastly, I would like to briefly discuss the slippery slope that this bill will put us on. The most obvious next step following assisted suicide would be active euthanasia where the physician actively administers the lethal drug. Since "Self-administer" is defined in Bill 5326 as "a qualified patient's act of ingesting medication" and many terminal patients use a feeding tube or are to incapacitated to self-administer, the physician would have to administer the drug. We can look to the Netherlands which has had a Euthanasia/Assisted Suicide law on the books for over 10 years. It has evolved to the point where today, in the Netherlands, a patient whose personal doctors refuse to terminate their lives or assist their suicide can simply visit a Life Ending Clinic for assistance. The clinic can even provide mobile units where a patient can register and, if they qualify, be euthanized at home.

I would like to close with a quote from The Times columnist, Tim Montgomerie, published in The Times UK on March 13<sup>th</sup> of this year:

**"Wherever assisted suicide (or any other form of euthanasia) has been legalised for narrow circumstances, a loophole opens up through which convoys of hearses are driven."**